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Hears for the Future of the Republic.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

LITERARY SOCIETIES

OF

Lafayette College,

BY

DANIEL DOUGHERTY, Esq.,

OF PHILADELPHIA,

JULY 26, 1859.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

WASHINGTON HALL, LAFAYETTE COLLEGE, }
September 14, 1859. }

MR. DOUGHERTY:

Dear Sir—In behalf of the Washington Literary Society, we present you our grateful thanks for your able, interesting, and eloquent address before the Societies of Lafayette at the last Commencement, and request a copy of the same for publication, so that it may go forth more widely with its noble thoughts, true eloquence, and practical efficiency, instructing the youth, by precept and *example*, to think deeply, speak fearlessly, and act nobly, while at the same time awakening them to the true reality of their Republic's condition.

Most respectfully, yours,

S. P. GALT,
S. G. BLYTHE, } *Committee.*
JACOB TITMAN, }

DANIEL DOUGHERTY, Esq., Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA, September 16, 1859. }
South-east corner Eighth and Locust streets. }

GENTLEMEN:

In compliance with the request, so flatteringly conveyed in your note of the 14th instant, I have the honor to submit to you, for publication, my address.

With grateful recollections of kindnesses received during my visit to Easton,

I remain,

With the highest regard,

Your friend,

DAN. DOUGHERTY.

Messrs. S. P. GALT, S. G. BLYTHE, JACOB TITMAN, Committee of Washington Literary Society, Lafayette College.

ADDRESS.

Permit me to begin by presenting to the members of the Washington Literary Society of Lafayette College my grateful acknowledgments for the unmerited honor they have conferred in inviting me to this presence and this place.

The orator of an occasion like this is generally selected from among the distinguished graduates of the College. He returns once more, like a wanderer to his early home, to tread the old familiar halls, to look around on scenes sanctified by departed joys, to feel the welcome grasp of long separated but ever faithful friends, to bask again in the smiles of those who perhaps first taught him to aspire, and to receive the thrilling congratulations of the venerated men who sent him forth into the world crowned with their blessings.

I appear here under no such auspices. I entered your College walls for the first time to-day. No old comrades are here to welcome me. A stranger to you all, I am sustained solely by the disinterested kindness which prompted the invitation, and I am sure the ladies and gentlemen present will lend an indulgent ear while I proceed feebly to discharge the duty assigned me.

The age in which we live, and the country we call our own, are the most marvellous that have existed since fallen Adam looked his last on Paradise. The boldest flights of the romancer, the wildest dreams of the poet, cannot parallel the rise and progress of this nation.

There are Peers in the British Parliament who are older than this Republic. When Henry Brougham was born the American continent was an almost unbroken wilderness. European kings claimed it as an appendage to their crowns. Here and there might be seen a cultivated spot, the plain yet pleasant home of a thrifty farmer. Occasionally the eye would light on a spacious mansion, where some wealthy gentleman lived in baronial ease.

Lazily sailing up the Hudson or the Delaware, once in a while would come some ship from the Old World. Population was almost exclusively confined to the eastern slopes of the Alleghenies. The missionary, the hunter, and the soldier only had advanced into the valley of the Mississippi; beyond, the land lay in the solemn stillness of primeval nature. Mighty lakes and rivers, on whose bosoms the combined navies of the nations might ride, had never been ruffled but by the storm, nor borne a mortal over their surface save when the canoe of the Indian bounded and bended on their billows. Millions and millions of miles of land, the products of which might feed the inhabitants of the earth, had never been tilled or touched by man.

Eighty years have sped, and America, touched by the talisman of freedom, has sprung from the downcast mien of neglected provinces into the towering altitude of a colossal empire, whose might the world has never matched, and of which it now doth stand in awe.

The solitude has been broken by the ceaseless din of thirty millions of people, battling for wealth and prosperity, in all the pursuits of enlightened life. Cities founded but yesterday rival in splendor European capitals that for centuries have been the abode of royalty. Our rivers are ever white with the canvas of thousands of ships as they sail and steam to and from the seaports of the world.

The valley of the Mississippi is carved into numerous Commonwealths. The Rocky Mountains impede not our progress, for California and Oregon are already prominent States, and the Pacific Ocean alone bounds the western limits of the Republic. Throughout this vast domain peace reigns supreme, and liberty hath made each man a king.

Science has here achieved grander victories than all the armadas and armies that ever swept the sea or shook the earth—victories, the fruits of which we pray may never perish, but survive to bless all posterity.

Science has scattered her trophies among all degrees of men; every home, every profession, pursuit, and trade, have been partakers of her triumphs. The ocean and its depths, the mountains and their peaks, are made tributary to her power.

She has dauntlessly carried her standard amid the Polar seas and over barriers of eternal ice, and sought for conquests there. She has annihilated time and space, and, with the power of the fabled Prospero, made the very elements obey; the lightning leaps to do her bidding and bear her missives around the world. With her all-searching glance she has penetrated into the deepest caverns of the earth, and explained to mortals the mysteries of nature.

She pierces the darkness of midnight, reads the stars, and tells how, in the wide ethereal concave, worlds roll on worlds, where eye hath never seen and foot hath never trod. Science here can do everything, save change thy unalterable decree, O, God! that all who live must die.

Such is our country, and such are her achievements.

The solemn question now presents itself and demands an answer from this generation: Is this nation to prosper in the long future as she has in the brief past? Will she stand the test of time, and make her name resound through a thousand years, or has she already reached her prime? Are her glories to depart like a dream? Is she henceforth to droop, to decay, until she dies? Shall she have written on her tomb, amid the shouts of despots and the gibes of slaves, "This was the last of the Republics?"

This is a subject fraught with weal or woe to all posterity. It appeals to us as Christians, as patriots, as lovers of our race, as the inheritors of a glorious past, and custodians of a peerless future.

To insure the stability of our Republican Institutions, and to grasp the rich prizes which hang all along our future, it is not enough that our territory extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific; that population increase; that commerce, manufactures, and agriculture thrive; that arts and education flourish; that science is all powerful. It is essential that the people shall never neglect their political duties, nor be indifferent to the requirements of public virtue, and that they preserve, in all its purity, their system of government—guarding it as Roman virgins did the vestal fire, to extinguish which betokened the destruction of the State.

He deserves not freedom who is unmindful of its cares. The priceless blessings we enjoy cannot be preserved but by the

ceaseless vigilance of the citizens. All experience teaches us that neglect is the forerunner of destruction. The affairs of an humble household, if neglected by its head, will soon become confused, and create disorder among the inmates.

If your honored Professors were indifferent to their grave duties, the College would be deserted. If the nobility and the gentry of England forgot for a time that the permanency of their vast possessions depended on their watching the wheels of government, and directing their every motion, quickly would tumults shake the land, if not subvert the throne itself.

If the Czar, or the Emperor of the French, gave themselves over to luxurious delights, scorning the details of State, soon, like Sardanapalus, they would find that the foe had passed the portals of their palaces, and they and their wide Empires fill a common grave.

A Republic, rightfully administered, disdains the pomp and parade of royalty; looks with equal love on the poor man and on the prince; she devotes her every energy to the advancement of the people; she gives the guidance of the Government to the majority, but guards with solemnity the rights of the minority; she protects the citizens from wrong without, and injustice within.

In return for all these blessings, she implores, as vital to her existence, that patriotism may be a living, practical sentiment—that wisdom, truth, and justice may shine in her councils, and that every citizen she calls her own will lend his aid and give his voice to keep her in the right.

Yet, in utter disregard of her supplications—in violation of plighted faith—in despite of our intellectual advancement and renown as a nation, the multitude give no proper attention to their political duties. Too often the industrial, commercial, and wealthy classes—those who have most at stake—seem least to care. If they vote on an election day, their consciences are easy for a twelvemonth. Intent on their individual pursuits, they give no heed to the common weal. The farmer, independent of the world, feeds his flocks, tills his fields, gathers in the golden grain, and sings the glad song of content. The mechanic, happy in his toil, devotes his days to his trade, his evenings to fire-side enjoyments, seemingly conscious that

while all goes well at home, no harm can come. The merchant, proud of his possessions, fancies himself secure, at least, from temporal ills. The professional man, the scholar and the savant, each confines himself to his respective pursuit.

While all these, in every probability, are members of some society, lodge, order, or company, either beneficial, charitable, social, or remunerative, and devote days and nights to its concerns, look to the selection of its officers, guard its treasury, see that its fundamental law is never departed from, yet, ask these gentlemen to give their attention to the selection of suitable men for responsible public positions—to watch that their sworn agents violate not their trusts—to see that no law is adopted which has not for its aim the general welfare—and they will tell you, with the air of offended virtue, they scorn to mix in politics, their time can be better employed—the country can take care of itself!

Thus the vast machinery of this huge Republic, in all its departments, divisions, and sub-divisions—national, state, county, and municipal—is, for the most part, left to the control of bands of men who make politics a trade—men who laugh at integrity—are insensible to patriotism—are regardless of intellect—who hate the man who tells the truth and will not cringe to them, and love the one who lowest bends, yet cheats them in the end. Who

“Are no surer, no—
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,
Or hailstone in the sun;
Who deserves greatness,
Deserves their hate.
With every minute they do change a mind,
And call him noble that was now their hate,
Him vile that was their garland.”

Thus, too, incompetency swaggers in prominent positions, bold-faced mediocrity drives superior attainments into private life, and, with audacious presumption, aspires even to the Presidency! Fraud and corruption hold their revels in high places. Legislation, at least in some States, has become a burning reproach. Discord rears her horrid front, and a division of the Union is gloried in by those who have sworn to defend the Constitution.

Let us particularize.

Many of our municipalities are crowded with public plunderers. Look, for instance, at our chief cities—in population, wealth, and

political importance, superior to many States. Yet, the great body of the citizens have no more to do with the naming of the candidates for public offices than they have with the election of a Commoner of England, or a Deputy of France. Irresponsible conventions, in which they seek no voice, and over which they exercise no influence, give them the candidates, and they "register the decrees." Places without salaries, a conscientious performance of the duties of which involves a consumption of considerable time, are with avidity sought after by men who, at least to the general eye, can ill afford the sacrifice. The secret is subsequently explained when they are detected in some nefarious act, by which the treasury is rifled of money collected from honest industry, or honorably-acquired wealth.

The public offices are canvassed for in all the haunts of vice. Candidates borrow money, if they have it not—hire horses and carriages by the week, drive to one locality to-day, to another to-morrow, buying the favor of the bully and the influence of the blackleg—staking their all on the hazard of a nomination. Some of the unsuccessful thus contract habits of idleness and intemperance, and end their days in drunkenness and despair. The nomination of the successful one is ratified by the good, easy electors, who think, in going to the polls, they have deserved well of their country, and the incumbent makes up for his expenditures, not unfrequently, by extortion, and every cunning trick that knavery can devise.

Not a few of the magistrates thus nominated and thus elected are worse than the culprits who come before them. In their civil jurisdiction suits are brought without the least semblance of truth or justice. The defendant, relying on the integrity of the "Justice," places the facts before him, sure of a successful result. Judgment is, nevertheless, rendered against him, and he is consoled by being told he can appeal to court, where the cost of counsel, loss of time, obligations to witnesses, and anxiety of mind, involve an expense in gaining the case greater than if he had submitted to the original wrong.

These are facts familiar to any ordinary observer.

The manifold abuses which result from the strange, nay, the criminal neglect of the masses of a city, can only be estimated by

those who have given the subject their attention, and watched the progress of the evil.

It has taught the worst influences the power of combinations; it has increased, in fifty ways, the taxes; it has corrupted the ballot-box; it has rendered impotent the law; it has made cities the scenes of dreadful conflicts—sometimes with the authorities, and sometimes between rival gangs—while the authorities stood by powerless to quell; it has given bad men influence in high places to retard the due administration of justice, and when the courts stand firm it has induced those who knew better, to petition and persuade the Executive of the State to violate his sworn duty, and to turn out upon the people the worst of criminals, while bands of ruffians meet them at the prison walls to bear them, like heroes, to their homes.

On the other hand, the great interests of the community are uncared for. Vast sums of money are applied to matters at best but of doubtful utility, while a parsimonious spirit is manifested in regard to others of the highest public importance. Few efforts are made to preserve the general health and comfort. No steps are taken to provide pleasures for the people, nor to anticipate the wants of coming generations.

Already has the startling doubt been broached, "Is self-government a failure in large cities?" and the statute-book of our own State reveals the humiliating fact that the election of certain officers in our metropolis has recently been taken from the people, and their appointment thrust on the Judiciary as the only department of the public service to which the delicate duty could be confided!

These are terrible truths!

"Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder?"

But, if these evils grow apace, how long will even the Judiciary be pure? The upright judge will be thrown aside for the pliant demagogue; and at length, our cities, instead of being so many bulwarks of the Republic, will become the points where insidious attacks will be soonest made and the surest to be successful.

But let us look beyond the confines of cities, and our observations take a wider range.

Surely it is of vital importance to the well-being of a State that its Legislature reflect the wishes of the people.

It is the right of representation that monarchs will not yield, and which was only won for us by the blood of the Revolution. The duties of legislators are the highest with which men can be entrusted.

“They are the guardians of the Constitution; the makers, repealers, and interpreters of the law; delegated to watch, to check, to avert every dangerous innovation; to propose, to adopt, and to cherish every solid and well-weighed improvement; bound by every tie of honor, nature, and religion, to transmit that Constitution and those laws to posterity, amended, if possible, at least without any derogation.”

Such is the language of Sir William Blackstone, used to express the duties of British legislators. Can they be regarded of less importance here? To legislate for a free people requires the advantages of education, the possession of the loftiest integrity, and the warmest sympathy with all the solid interests of the State. Yet there are those who legislate for the different States of the American Confederacy who are unable to read, much less to frame a statute! who know nothing of our past history, present wants, or future prospects; who are ignorant of the Constitution, and would not dare to fill the humblest of clerkships, yet occupy seats in legislative halls!

But their ignorance is their least fault. Corruption swarms around each capitol, daring the gaze and defying the power of outraged constituencies. Legislation is bought and sold. Within a year it has come to light that, in one of the vigorous States of the West, the majority of the Legislature, with many of the State officers, in violation of their oaths, and of honor, were purchased each for a given price.

How has our beloved Pennsylvania suffered, and how does she suffer now? The cost to the Commonwealth for each session of the Legislature reaches nearly one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, or aggregating a million every six or seven years. Each session occupies about four months. Is that time taken up in the consideration and passage of salutary laws, to bind the States in still closer ties, to benefit the people, to aid the industrial classes,

to foster commerce? Ah, no! such themes are seldom thought of. Public laws are scarcely ever passed, and then only after the dire persuasion of suffering citizens. The whole period, with rare intervals, is occupied in passing acts that are sapping the foundations of individual enterprise, that are debasing the workingman, and will soon place him and his family at the mercy of the heartless speculator, that are rendering precarious the possessions of the wealthy, that are breaking down all the barriers of civil society; acts that are enacted at the beck and nod of villains who each winter congregate at the capitol, and sell the sovereignty of the State to all who will pay the price that they may name.

Gangs of sharpers, sometimes from distant States, despising the slow gains which wait on patient toil, concoct their plans, collect funds, crave special privileges, and carry, through the forms of legislation, schemes to entrap the unwary, to tempt the toiler to deposit his earnings, the frugal to invest his savings, the prosperous to insure his property. In a few years the bubble bursts, the credulous are reduced to want, while the wrong-doers roll by them in their cushioned carriages, and laugh at the ruin they have spread where once were happy homes.

At the recent session of our Legislature, there were about fifteen hundred bills proposed in the House, and about eleven hundred in the Senate. Seven hundred and thirty acts were passed, of which some *six* or *seven* were of general public importance, and the greater number of the rest were acts creating private corporations, or conferring additional privileges on those already created.

Against the enactment of such laws, in vain the honest members strive; in vain they declare that, if private corporations are chartered in the same ratio for the next twenty years, as they have for the last ten years, here will exist an aristocracy more powerful than that of England—an aristocracy of grasping corporators, who will grow stronger and stronger until every department of trade, agriculture, commerce, and manufactures shall be helplessly within their power. In vain they point to the fact that thousands and tens of thousands of men who should belong to the producing classes, and be training their children to habits of industry, are the hangers-on and retainers of corporations, acquiring expensive habits, living in comparative idleness themselves, and by their ex-

ample teaching their offspring to follow in their wake. In vain they may tell that ancient Rome looked with jealous eyes on all such combinations, and the greatest of modern political economists regarded them as generally injurious to the freedom of trade and progress of improvements.

Either at chance hours, when opponents are absent, these bills are hurried through—perhaps coiled up under the title of some proper measure they never arrest attention—or else they are boldly advocated by legislators openly bribed or secretly seduced to their support. The very rules of the House of Representatives are framed to assist this species of legislation.

Oh! it makes my bosom swell with indignation when I think that our grand old State, so fertile and so free—with a domain matchless in beauty and boundless in wealth—with a history crowded with high resolves and noble deeds—with a population virtuous, intelligent, and brave—with colleges, seminaries, and schools, flashing their intellectual fires from every hill-top—with institutions of charity and beneficence dotting every plain—with revealed religion shedding its serene influence over all—that she still tamely submits to these despoilers of her charms, and her people rise not in their wrath and drive them forth forever from the temple of our political liberties.

Better for us and for our posterity—better for our peace at home, our character abroad—that the Legislature of Pennsylvania should meet but once in ten years, than that the State should be disgraced by such representatives, and dishonored by such laws.

If it be wrong to be unmindful of our political duty to the municipality and the State, it magnifies into a crime when we are careless of the concerns of our common country.

It cannot be questioned that the people, at least in relation to the high offices of the nation, should, of their free choice, select those most competent to discharge exalted functions; that capacity, integrity, and political belief should alone actuate the preference; that candidates, from motives of delicacy, should refuse

“To put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds’ sake, to give their suffrages.”

But such thoughts are regarded as Utopian, unfit for this practical age! Talent, integrity, and political belief have nothing to

do with the selection, and sometimes are positive disadvantages. Representatives and Senators blush not to buy their seats, then flaunt in the sunshine, fancying themselves great when they are nought but degenerate sons, unworthy of the land they live in, and meriting the withering scorn of every upright man.

Come with me, in imagination, into the first of deliberative assemblies—even into the Senate of the United States—not, indeed, into the old chamber which so often rang with the eloquence, and heard the sage counsel of our brightest and our best, and which should, in far-hereafter, like the great hall of William Rufus, be linked with the memories of centuries, but which, by the vile spirit of innovation, in less than sixty years from its first service, is deserted by its members, stripped of its decorations and its hangings, uncared for by the thousands who each hour pass its outer doors, and only visited by the thoughtful few who love to break in upon its solitude, linger around its pillars, and dwell with rapture in thoughts of the mighty spirits who once trod its floor, and there contended for their country in high and matchless debate,—let us join the thoughtless throng, pass down the marble corridor, mount the magnificent staircase, and enter where much money and little taste have combined to make the new Senate House.

Those we look on should be the picked men of the Republic,—men raised to that proud eminence by the unsolicited choice of free Commonwealths—men gifted with wisdom and genius improved and cultivated by education and experience, whose past careers have been rendered brilliant by the faithful discharge of public trusts, and beautiful by exercise of personal integrity, to whom we could all, with proudly-beating breasts, point as Statesmen, to whose guidance the nation could be confided, even in times of extremest peril. Yet, is this so? Alas, no!

A few there are, ripe in wisdom, ready in debate, patriotic in their purposes, alive to the true dignity of their exalted stations; but the majority are mere politicians, clever only in trickery, whose aim is not the happiness, the honor, and the glory of their country, but the success of a political organization, the procurement of a re-election, an appointment from the Executive, the possession of patronage, or some rich job by which they may retire to live in sloth, and give place to others no better than themselves.

The moral tone of the Senate is departing. It is no longer clothed with awe. Even its appearance is unprepossessing. The members are seen lolling on sofas, walking to and fro, seemingly anxious to attract the gaze of the galleries, and with hat in hand, hurrying in and out, while some "grave" Senator is speaking, by the day, without a listener, save the phonographer.

Speeches are never made to influence legislation. It is seldom they are delivered to a full and listening Senate. Sometimes they are never delivered, but are published and circulated as electioneering pamphlets.

It is noised abroad that there are "honorable" Senators who use their places to make money, and that bills have been pressed, and passed, in which they deigned to feel a *personal* interest. On questions of disputed seats, Senators vote not as if the will of a sovereign State was to be obeyed, but according to the political proclivities of the respective contestants.

Months and months are occupied in fruitless debate, while but little care is given even to the national defences, and it is to be feared that all the great cities of the Atlantic seaboard could be destroyed by the maritime powers of Europe within a month from the declaration of war.

The high-bred courtesies of gentlemen have, before now, given place to scurrility and personal abuse. Weapons have been brandished, blows inflicted, and Senators felled to the floor. The Executive has been denounced for enforcing the law of nations, and the acts of armed marauders who sought to colonize or conquer neighboring States, have been justified on the ground that they were weak and we were strong.

No sane man, with a sound heart, can doubt that the first duty of every American Statesman is to preserve, in all its purity, the union of these States, by a generous and rigid obedience to the plain precepts of the Constitution. As long as fraternal love binds together all our people, the Union will ride in safety over every billow, and defy the dangers of every storm.

Yet many of our modern Solons are striving to accomplish that which the combined powers of Europe, in arms, could never do. Undeserving of notice, they seek to attract the public eye, and agitate the public mind, by the utterance of the wildest doctrines and the most disloyal sentiments. The Revolution, its trials and

its triumphs, are forgotten. The Constitution, framed by the fathers, is pronounced a failure. The Union, freighted with the blessings of millions yet unborn, is declared by them to have outlived its purposes. They are bent on creating jealousies among the people, engendering sectional hate, and enkindling the fires of fierce civil war.

If the evils flowing from these sources could be restrained within the walls of our national capitol, we might possibly still be content to regard them with indifference, but they have long since broken down all barriers and now deluge the land.

If the moral and intellectual standard of our Senators and Representatives continues to fall, while the power of the President rises by his increasing patronage consequent on the growth and expansion of the republic, there will be much reason to revive the fears of Patrick Henry.

Our character as a people is suffering, for it is judged by foreign nations, not by the virtues which shine resplendently in private life, but by the bearing of those entrusted with the high offices of State.

Already are brother Americans looking sullenly on each other; boasting of their respective sections, and ignoring the rest of their country; exacting compliance with claims of doubtful legality, yet denying to each other the exercise of unquestioned rights. The citizen of the North, who, clothed with the proper commission, attempts to arrest the criminal who has fled to a Southern State, is hooted from town to town, and driven back like a foe beyond its borders. The citizen of the South, coming North under the express sanction of the Constitution, to secure his property, has it rescued from him by an armed mob, who seek the "penalties with exultation and defiance."

In the North, conventions composed of delegates representing distant constituencies, outrage all propriety by the violence of their fanatical appeals, and devise means to oppose the execution of national laws.

In the South, conventions of able men advocate the opening of the slave trade, and in open day, and with defiant tone, proclaim treason to the Republic.

Unchecked, where will all this end? In bloody and exterminating civil war—in the separation of the South from the North—in the downfall of the Republic—in the destruction of liberty—and

in consigning the world into the iron gripe of those who will rule it if the people will not. If we are true to ourselves, and faithful to our political responsibilities, this nation will survive all the kingdoms of the earth, and make the world republican.

But if we be unfit to carry out the theory of our government—if we be indifferent to the troubles which are gathering about us—if we trifle with the richest heritage ever bequeathed to a people—if we laugh at the labors of our sires—if we mock the counsels of the mighty dead—if we prove traitors to human nature, and ingrates to Jehovah, by whom we have been supremely blessed, and the Union is rent in twain, the end will draw near—love will have turned to hate—war bellow forth its fiery vengeance—alliances be formed with foreign powers—armies, led by rival despots, will cumber our sweet valleys, and, with the feigned battle-cries of “Justice to the North!” “Justice to the South!” conquer all: liberty will expire, and never light the world again.

If the American people are unable to discharge the duties of freemen, no other people ever can be free. Generations will be born, fulfil their destiny, and die—unknown nations rise, become powerful, then pass away—centuries roll on centuries, yet liberty will never revive—and the wreck of the American Republic will be pointed at to warn mankind against the shoals of self-government.

I know this may be regarded as the language of despondency, but he is unwise who will not heed the teachings of experience.

Search the great volume of the past, prophetic of the future. Its every page tells of the mutability of all earthly glory, and that even in the firmest hour there may be much to fear. The conqueror soon became a captive. He who led the legions of imperial Rome in triumph, over field and flood, when robed with the purple, surrounded by suppliants—in the capitol, even in the presence of the Senate—fell a murdered corpse. The master of the world, giving himself over to bacchanalian delights, in phrensy died, dreading those who waited on his word.

So, too, with nations. Athens was once the queen of cities as of the sea. Her coasts were covered with colonies, and commerce laid its treasures at her feet. The mechanical arts were cultivated. Men were born to her whose names shall never die. Painting and music had their great masters. Architecture, sculpture, poetry, eloquence, and philosophy furnished models for all future time.

Her armies and her navies triumphed. But when her people became dazzled with splendors, and thought themselves omnipotent—when they drove into exile or punished with death the great and good, and showered smiles and shed honors on ranting demagogues—when jealousies among the sister States of Greece broke into wars—then, in a brief while, her armies and her navies were scattered, commerce shrunk from her shores, the arts drooped, petty tyrants lorded it, and her people in the end were succeeded, on the self-same soil, by abject slaves, who wandered among the ruins of their ancestry, insensible to shame and proud of the smiles of the conquerors.

Look at Rome, the mighty mistress of the ancient world, whose conquests burst the boundaries of Europe, laid Carthage waste, and made from Britain to Egypt tributary to her power! Enervated by success, patriotism became but a name. Corruption stalked along her streets, and centered in her capitol. The Republic withered, civil wars ensued, rival chiefs fought for sovereign sway, her seven centuries of glory began to wane, her power to depart, and now the owl doth build her nest where once Cato counseled and Cicero declaimed! Shall this be the fate of our dear country?

When we behold, even by our side, a sister Republic torn by domestic dissensions and fast crumbling to ruin—when now, on the blood-soaked soil of Europe, hundreds of thousands of brave men, to minister to the designs of rival robbers, are slaughtering each other, while the wail of broken hearts and crushed hopes rises from every home,—Oh! let us be thankful to God for his surpassing goodness to us, and strive with all our might to merit his benediction.

Let American citizens awake from this strange, this unaccountable lethargy, and arise to a contemplation of the transcendent importance of the political responsibilities reposed in them. Let the inordinate passion for individual wealth be restrained within proper bounds. Let each citizen scrupulously fulfil his every duty to his country. No duty can be trifling in which she is interested. Refuse to reward political beggars. Let office seek the man, and not man the office. Then will the Republic continue to protect us and our posterity, and speed through the future, like an angel on a mission, lifting the lowly, shielding the oppressed, guarding the free, defending the right, and achieving her proper destiny—the *political regeneration of the human race*.

Young gentlemen of the Washington and Franklin Literary Societies—deeply grateful for the honor tendered, as far removed from my expectations as deservings—I have endeavored to evince my appreciation of your kindness by speaking, not so much for your pleasure as your profit.

My aim has been, not to give expression to sentences which might fall like music on the ear, yet leave no impress on the mind. I have rather sought to give utterance to facts than phrases, preferring fruit to foliage, and though I have but skimmed the surface of the subject, I have yet shown you the wrongs your country suffers from carelessness and corruption, with the hope that you, like Hannibal, will vow to wage perpetual war against these, her direst foes. I cannot claim the privilege of age, and counsel you—indeed, it would be presumption in such a presence—but I am confident you will accept with pleasure a few more words from a parting friend.

During your sojourn here, in the peaceful shades of scholarship, devote yourselves assiduously to your studies; for, believe me, each hour now is more precious than a jewel. In a brief while you will bid a long farewell to your Alma Mater, and enter on the great battle-field of life, where each is contending with the other and all are struggling for the mastery.

Strengthened by education, nerved with the courage to do right, armed with weapons of virtue, and relying on Him who guides and governs all, cheerily march into the thickest of the perils, aiming your blows at corruption and wrong. If you meet with reverses, bear bravely up against them. They will yield, and victory will be yours.

Cherish a love for all your fellow-countrymen. Curb the violence of party spirit. Whatever may be your pursuit in life, labor to gain an honorable position, and endeavor to win the prize of pre-eminence. But become not so immersed in your individual pursuits as to smother the ennobling sentiments of our nature.

Let the fires of patriotism ever burn brightly in your bosoms and shine in all your actions. Be obedient, loving, and true to the Republic, whose hopeful gaze is fixed upon you. Fulfil her expectations, and oh, it will be “a pleasure to grow old, when the years that bring decay to ourselves do but ripen the prosperity of our country!”



Fears for the Future of the Republic.

AN ADDRESS

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